

Photos depict internment tragedy

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chance discovery of a cache of nearly forgotten photographs by Ansel Adams has yielded a new book with a haunting insider's view of the internment camps where more than 120,000 Japanese-Americans were held captive during World War II.

The insider was Adams himself, the renowned scenic photographer who left Yosemite National Park with his cameras in the fall of 1943 to visit an internment camp at Manzanar, in the wind-swept desert along the eastern edge of California's Sierra Nevada.

It was there that Adams made his first — and only — attempt to shoot a photo documentary. The photographer, sympathetic to the plight of the innocent inhabitants, published some of the pictures in "Born Free and Equal," a book he later wrote about Manzanar.

But the wartime public's reaction was hostile. Copies were burned in protest, and the photographer's shows were canceled. Adams let the copyright expire, and gave the negatives and hand-signed prints to the Library of Congress in the 1960s.

Not long after Adams' death in 1984, Peter Wright, a news photo editor at The Associated Press in Washington, was spending his day off rummaging through the library's vast collection of original photographs and negatives.



AP Laserphoto

Noted scenic photographer Ansel Adams shot this picture of Japanese internment camp at Manzanar, Calif. during 1943.

Wright came across a catalogue card listing the negatives of Adams' "Manzanar" pictures. Curious, he asked to see them.

"Up came about a dozen cases of 11-by-14 prints, about 240 of them, all hand-signed by Adams along with the negatives," Wright said.

"It was unbelievable. These pictures had been mentioned in several books about Adams, but I had only seen one or two of the published prints.

Suddenly to see the whole collection was amazing."

Now, with access to rare and highly valuable photographs hidden away in a vault at the Library of Congress for two decades, Wright turned to friend John Armor, a constitutional lawyer who has studied the legal controversy over the wartime internment of Japanese-Americans.

Together, they reviewed piles of documents at the Na-

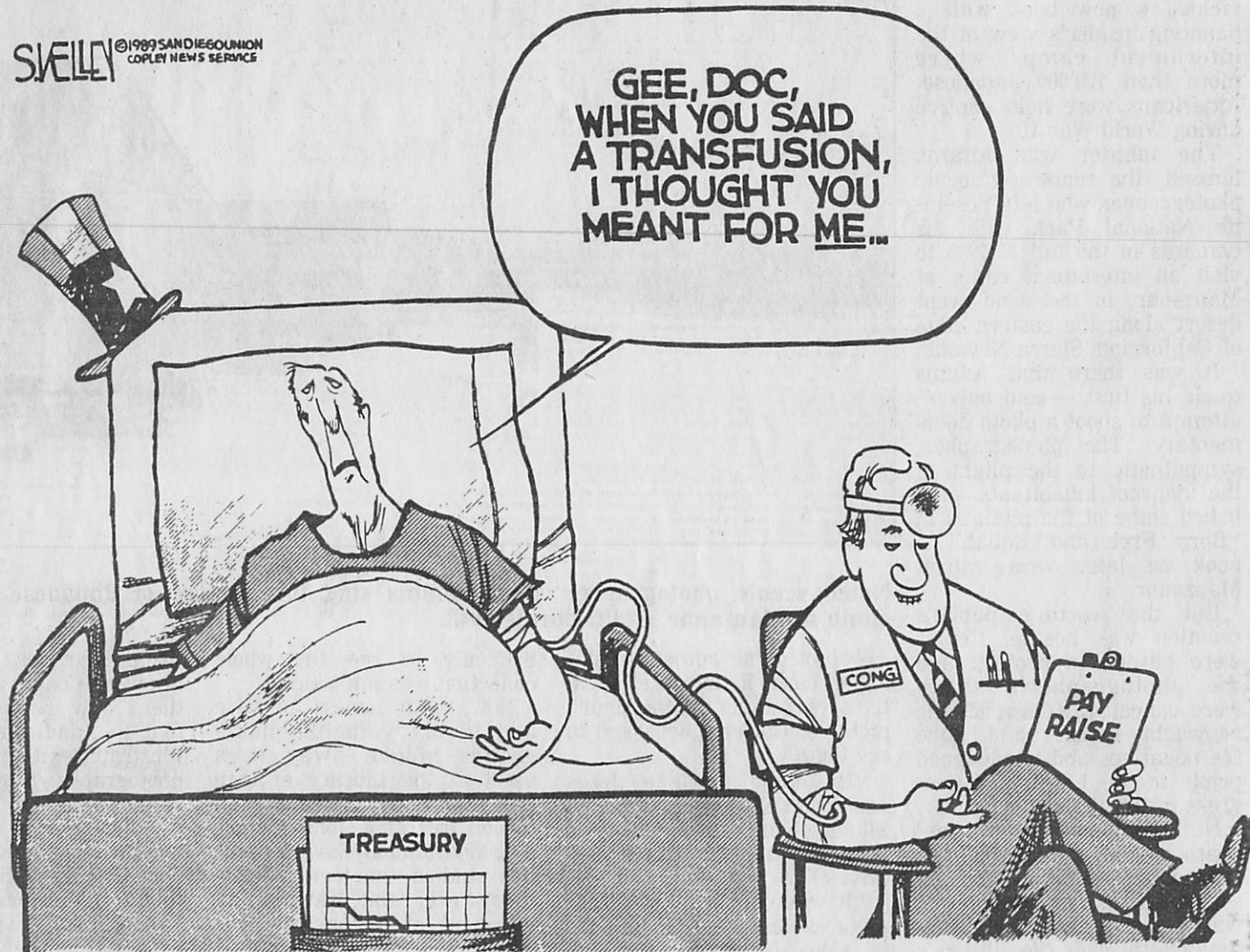
tional Archives and the Library of Congress — some of them only recently declassified — and wrote a book illustrated with 90 of Adams' photographs from the Manzanar camp.

"Manzanar," containing a lengthy foreword by novelist John Hersey entitled "A Mistake of Terrifically Horrible Proportions," was published last November by Times Books, a division of Random House Inc.

The Herald, its readers,
syndicated columnists and
cartoonists discuss the issues.



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